

STRANGERS.

I Was a Stranger and Ye Took Me In" Beautifully Elaborated.

The Sunshine and Shadows of a Great City Pictured in the Pulpit by Rev. Dr. T. LeWitt Talmage, D. D.

The text selected by Dr. Talmage last Sunday was Matthew xxv, 35: "I was a stranger and ye took me in."

It is a moral disaster that jocosity has despoiled so many passages of Scripture, and my text is one that has suffered from irreverent misapplied quotation. It shows great poverty of wit and humor when people take the sword of Divine truth for a game at fencing, or chip off from the Kohinoor diamond of inspiration a sparkle to decorate a fool's cap. My text is the salutation in the last judgment to be given to those who have shown hospitality, and kindness, and Christian helpfulness to strangers. By railroad and steamboat the population of the earth are all the time in motion, and from one year's end to another our cities are crowded with visitors. Every morning on the tracks of the Hudson River, the Pennsylvania, the Erie and the Long Island railroads there come passenger trains more than I can number; so that all the depots and the wharves are a-rumble and a-clang with the coming in of a great immigration of strangers. Some of them come for purposes of barter, some for mechanism, some for artistic gratification, some for sight-seeing. A great many of them go out on the evening trains, and consequently the city makes but little impression upon them; but there are multitudes who, in the hotels and boarding-houses, make temporary residences. They tarry here for three or four days, or as many weeks. They spend the days in the stores and the evenings in sight-seeing. Their temporary stay will make or break them, not only financially but morally, for this world and the world that is to come. Multitudes of them come into our morning and evening services. I am conscious that I stand in the presence of many this morning. I desire more especially to speak to them. May God give me the right word and help me to utter it in the right way.

There have glided into this house those unknown to others, whose history, if told, would be more thrilling than the deepest tragedy, more exciting than Patti's song, more bright than a spring morning, more awful than a wintry midnight. If they could stand up here and tell the story of their escapes, and their temptations, and their bereavements, and their disasters, there would be in this house such a commingling of groans and exclamations as would make the place unendurable.

There is a man, who, in infancy, lay in a cradle satin-lined. Out yonder is a man who was picked up, a foundling, on Boston Common. Here is a man who is coolly observing this religious service, expecting no advantage, and caring for no advantage for himself; while yonder is a man who has been for ten years in an awful conflagration of evil habits, and he is a mere cinder of a destroyed nature, and he is wondering if there shall be in this service any escape or help for his immortal soul. Meeting you only once, perhaps, face to face, I strike hands with you in an earnest talk about your present condition, and your eternal well-being. St. Paul's ship at Melita went to pieces where two seas met; but we stand to-day at a point where a thousand seas converge, and eternity alone can tell the issue of the hour.

The hotels of this country, for beauty and elegance, are not surpassed by the hotels in any other land; but those that are most celebrated for brilliancy of tapestry and mirror can not give to the guest any costly apartment, unless he can afford a parlor in addition to his lodging. The stranger, therefore, will generally find assigned to him a room without any pictures, and perhaps any rocky chair! He will find a box of matches on a bureau, and an old newspaper left by a previous occupant and that will be about all the ornamentation. About 7 o'clock in the evening, after having taken his repast he will look over his memorandum book of the day's work; he will write a letter to his home, and then a desperation will seize him to get out.

You hear the great city thundering under your window and you say: "I must join that procession," and in ten minutes you have joined it. Where are you going? "Oh," you say, "I haven't made up my mind yet." Better make up your mind before you start. Perhaps the very way you go now you will always go. Twenty years ago there were two young men who came down the Astor house steps and started in a wrong direction, where they have been going ever since.

"Well, where are you going?" says one man. "I am going to the academy to hear some music." Good. I would like to join you at the door. At the tap of the orchestral baton all the gates of harmony and beauty will open before your soul. I congratulate you. Where are you going? "Well," you say, "I am going up to see some advertised pictures." Good. I should like to go along with you and look over some catalogue, and study with you Kensett, and Bierstadt, and Church, and Moran. Nothing more elevating than good pictures. Where are you going? "Well," you say, "I am going up to the Young

Men's Christian Association rooms." Good. You will find there gymnastics to strengthen the muscles, and books to improve the mind, and Christian influence to save the soul. I wish every city in the United States had as fine a palace for its Young Men's Christian Association as New York has. Where are you going? "Well," you say, "I am going to take a long walk up Broadway, and so turn around into the Bowery. I am going to study human life." Good. A walk through Broadway at 8 o'clock at night is interesting, educating, fascinating, appalling, exhilarating to the last degree. Stop in front of that theater and see who goes in. Stop at that saloon and see who comes out. See the great tides of life surging backward and forward and beating against the marble of the curbstone, and eddying down into the saloons. What is that mark on the face of that debauchee? It is the hectic flush of eternal death. What is that woman's laughter? It is the shriek of a lost soul. Who is that Christian man going along with a vial of anodyne to the dying pauper on Elm street? Who is that belated man on the way to a prayer meeting? Who is that city missionary going to take a box in which to bury a child? Who are all these clusters of bright and beautiful faces? They are going to some interesting place of amusement. Who is that man going into the drug store? That is the man who yesterday lost all his fortune on Wall street. He is going in for a dose of belladonna, and before morning it will make no difference to him whether stocks are up or down. I tell you that Broadway, between 7 and 12 o'clock at night, between the Battery and Central park, is an Austerlitz, a Gettysburg, a Waterloo, where kingdoms are lost or won and three worlds mingle in the strife.

I meet another coming down off the hotel steps, and I say: "Where are you going?" You say: "I am going with a merchant of New York who has promised to show me the underground life of the city. I am his customer, and he is going to oblige me very much." Stop! A business that tries to keep your custom through such a process as that is not worthy of you. There are business establishments in our cities which have for years been sending to destruction thousands and thousands and thousands of merchants. They have a secret drawer in the counter where money is kept, and the clerk goes and gets it when he wants to take these visitors to the city through the low slums of the place. Shall I mention the names of these great commercial establishments? I have them on my lips. Shall I? Perhaps I had better leave it to the young men who, in that process, have been destroyed themselves while they have been destroying others. I care not how high-sounding the name of a commercial establishment is if it proposes to get customers or to keep them by such a process as that. Drop their acquaintance. They will cheat you before you get through. They will send you a style of goods different from that which you bought by sample. They will give you underweight. There will be in the package half a dozen less pairs of suspenders than you paid for. They will rob you. Oh, you feel in your pockets and say: "Is my money gone?" They have robbed you of something which dollars and cents can never give you compensation. When one of these western merchants has been dragged by one of these commercial agents through the slums of the city he is not fit to go home. The mere memory of what he has seen will be moral pollution. I think you had better let the city missionary and the police attend to the exploration of New York and underground life. You do not go to a smallpox hospital for the purpose of exploration. You do not go there because you are afraid of contagion. And yet you go into the presence of a moral leprosy that is as much more dangerous to you as the death of the soul is worse than death of the body. I will undertake to say that nine-tenths of the men who have been ruined by simply going to observe, without any idea of participating. The fact is that underground city life is a filthy, fuming, reeking poisonous depth which blasts the eye that looks at it. In the Reign of terror, in 1793, in Paris, people escaping from the officers of the law, got into the sewers of the city and crawled and walked through miles of that awful labyrinth, stifled with the atmosphere and almost dead, some of them, when they came out to the River Seine, where they washed themselves and again breathed the fresh air. But I have to tell you that a great many of the men who go on the work of exploration through the underground gutters of New York life never came out at Seine river where they can wash off the pollution of the moral sewage. Stranger, if one of the representatives of a commercial establishment proposes to take you and show you the "sights" of the town and underground New York, say to him: "Please, sir, what part do you propose to show me?"

About 16 years ago, as a minister of religion, I felt I had a divine commission to explore the iniquities of our cities. I did not ask counsel of my session, or my presbytery, or of the newspapers, but asking the companionship of three prominent police officials and two of the elders of my church, I unrolled my commission and it said: "Son of man, dig into the wall; and when I had digged into the wall, behold a door, and he

said go in and see the wicked abominations that are done here; and I went in, and saw, and behold!" Brought up in the country, and surrounded by much parental care, I had not until that time seen the haunts of iniquity. By the grace of God defended, I had never sowed my "wild oats." I had somehow been able to tell from various sources something about the iniquities of the great cities, and to preach against them; but I saw, in the people, that there must be an infatuation and a temptation that had never been spoken about, and I said: "I will explore." I saw thousands of men going down, and if there had been a spiritual percussion answering to the physical percussion, the whole air would have been full of rumble, and roar, and crack, and thunder of demolition, and this moment, if we should pause in our service, we should hear the crash, crash! Just as in the sickly season you sometimes hear the bell at the gate of the cemetery ringing almost incessantly, so I found that the bell at the gate of the cemetery where ruined souls are buried was tolling by day, and tolling by night. I said, "I will explore." I went as a physician goes into a fever lazzaretto, to see what practical and useful information I might get. That would be a foolish doctor who would stand outside the door of an invalid writing a Latin prescription. When the lecturer in a medical college is done with his lecture, he takes his students into the dissecting room, and he shows them the reality. I went and saw, and came forth to my pulpit to report a plague, and to tell how sin dissects the body, and dissects the mind, and dissects the soul. "Oh!" say you, "are you not afraid that in consequence of such exploration of the iniquities of the city other persons might make exploration, and do themselves damage?" I reply: "If in company with the commissioner of police, and the captain of police, and the inspector of police, and the company of two Christian gentlemen, and not with the spirit of curiosity, but that you may see sin in order the better to combat it, then, in the name of the eternal God, go. But, if not, then stay away." Wellington, standing in the battle of Waterloo when the bullets were buzzing around his head, saw a civilian on the field. He said to him: "Sir, what are you doing here? Be off!" "Why," replied the civilian, "there is no more danger here for me than there is for you." Then Wellington flushed up and said: "God and my country demand that I be here, but you have no errand here." Now I, as an officer in the army of Jesus Christ, went on that exploration, and on that battlefield. If you bear a like commission, go; if not, stay away. But you say, "Don't you think that somehow the description of those places induces people to go and see for themselves?" I answer yes, just as much as the description of yellow fever in some scourged city would induce people to go down there and get the pestilence. But I may be addressing some stranger already destroyed. Where is he, that I may pointedly yet kindly address him. Come back! and wash in the deep fountain of a Saviour's mercy. I do not give you a cup, or a chalice, or a pitcher with a limited supply to effect your abolutions. I point you to the five oceans of God's mercy. Oh! that the Atlantic and Pacific surges of divine forgiveness might roll over your soul. As the glorious son of God's forgiveness rides on towards the midheavens, ready to submerge you in warmth and light and love, I bid you good morning! Morning of peace for all your troubles. Morning of liberation for all your incarcerations. Morning of resurrection for your soul buried in sin. Good morning! Morning for the resuscitated household that has been waiting for your return. Morning for the cradle and the crib already disgraced with being that of a drunkard's child. Morning for the daughter that has trudged off to hard work because you did not take care of home. Morning for the wife who at forty or fifty years has the wrinkled face, and the stooped shoulder, and the white hair. Morning for one. Morning for all. Good morning! In God's name, good morning!

In our last dreadful war the federals and the confederates were encamped on opposite sides of the Rappahannock, and one morning the brass band of the northern troops played the national air, and all the northern troops cheered and cheered. Then on the opposite side of the Rappahannock the brass band of the confederates played "My Maryland" and "Dixie," and then all the southern troops cheered and cheered. But after awhile one band struck up "Home, Sweet Home," and the band on the opposite side took up the strain, and when the tune was done the confederates and federal all together united, as the tears rolled down their cheeks, in one grand huzzah! Well, my friends, Heaven comes very near to-day. It is only a stream that divides us—the narrow stream of death—and the voices there and the voices here seem to commingle, and we join trumpets, and hosannas, and hallelujahs, and the chorus of the united song of earth and Heaven is, "Home, Sweet Home." Home of bright domestic circle on earth. Home of forgiveness in the great heart of God. Home of eternal rest in Heaven. Home! Home! Home!

But suppose you are standing on a crag of the mountain, and on the edge of a precipice, and all unguarded, and some one either in joke or hate shall run up behind you and push you off. It is easy enough to push you off. But

who would do so dastardly a deed? Why, that is done every hour of every day and every hour of every night. Men come to the verge of city life and say: "Now, we will just look off. Come, young man, do not be afraid. Come near, let us look off." He comes to the edge and looks, and looks until, after awhile, Satan sneaks up behind him, and puts a hand on each of his shoulders, and pushes him off. Society says it is evil proclivity on the part of that young man. Oh, no! He was simply an explorer and sacrifices his life in discovery. A young man comes in from the country bragging that nothing can do him any harm. He knows about all the tricks of city life. "Why," he says, "did not I receive a circular in the country telling me that somehow they found out I was a sharp business man, and if I would only send a certain amount of money by mail or express, charges prepaid, they would send a package with which I could make a fortune in two months; but I did not believe it. My neighbors did, but I did not. Why, no man could take my money. I carry it in a pocket inside my vest. No man could take it. No man could cheat me at the faro table. Don't I know all about the 'casebox,' and the dealer's box, and the cards stuck together as though they were one, and when to hand in my check? Oh, they can't cheat me. I know what I am about." While at the same time, that very moment, such men are succumbing to the worst satanic influences, in the simple fact that they are going to observe. Now, if a man or woman shall go down into the haunt of iniquity for the purpose of reforming men and women, or for the purpose of being intelligently able to warn people against such perils—if, as did John Howard or Elizabeth Fry or Thomas Chalmers, they go down among the abandoned for the sake of saving them, then such explorers shall be God-protected, and they will come out better than they went in. But, if you go on this work of exploration merely for the purpose of satisfying a morbid curiosity, I will take 20 per cent. off your moral character.

Sabbath morning comes. You wake up in the hotel. You have had a longer sleep than usual. You say: "Where am I? A thousand miles from home? I have no family to take to church to-day. My pastor will not expect my presence. I think I shall look over my accounts and study my memorandum book. Then I will write a few business letters, and talk to that merchant who came in on the same train with me." Stop! you can not afford to do it. "But," you say, "I am worth \$500,000." You can not afford to do it. You say: "I am worth a million dollars." You can not afford to do it. All you gain by breaking the Sabbath you will lose. You will lose one of three things: Your intellect, your morals or your property, and you can not point in the whole earth to a single exception to this rule. God gives us six days and keeps one for Himself. Now, if we try to get the seventh, He will upset the work of all the other six.

I remember going up Mt. Washington before the railroad was built, to the Tip-Top house, and the guide would come around to our horses and stop us when we were crossing a very steep and dangerous place, and he would tighten the girth of the horse and straighten the saddle. And I have to tell you that this road of life is so steep and full of peril we must, at least one day in seven, stop and have the harness of life adjusted, and our souls re-equipped. The seven days of the week are like seven business partners, and you must give to each one his share, or the business will be broken up. God is so generous with us; He has given you six days to His one. Now, here is a father who has seven apples, and he gives six to his greedy boy, proposing to keep one for himself. The greedy boy grabs for the other one and loses all the six.

How few men there are who know how to keep the Lord's Day away from home. A great many men who are consistent on the banks of the St. Lawrence, or the Alabama, or the Mississippi, are not consistent when they go so far off as the East river. I repeat—though it is putting it on a low ground you can not financially afford to break the Lord's Day. It is another way of tearing up your government securities, and putting down the price of goods, and blowing up your store. I have friends who are all the time slicing off pieces of the Sabbath. They cut a little of the Sabbath off that end, and a little of the Sabbath off this end. They do not keep the twenty-four hours. The Bible says: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

A professor was lately lecturing at the Harvard Annex to a class of three. In the course of his talk, he came to an exposition of his views as to woman's functions in the body politic. "Women," said he, "are merely the element of beauty in life; their business is to make life graceful, and they can't do that, you know, unless they themselves are pretty and graceful. If a girl is not pretty, she might just as well vanish from the face of the earth—that is," he qualified, as he gazed at the three sober-spectacled faces in front of him—"er, unless—she's tolerably pretty, you know."

"Hold your tongue, Tommie," said Tommie's father. "You chatter, chatter, chatter all the time." "Tain't my tongue, papa," said Tommie. "It's my teeth; what's chattering?"—Harper's Bazar.

SCHOOL AND CHURCH.

—The Christian church has one preacher in the foreign field for each two hundred at home.

—The gifts of Christian Endeavor societies to the American board and the woman's board, during 1893, amounted to \$13,535.

—In the United States and British America there are 130,197 Sunday schools. These are attended by over 10,000,000 pupils.

—Of the 34,376 Protestant clergymen of England and Wales, only 222 are of foreign birth; while of the 2,511 Romish priests, 305 are of foreign birth.

—London is stirred over a discussion touching religious instruction in the public schools. The non-sectarian influence in school matters is growing.

—The Evangelist relates that when somebody once asked Dr. Philip Schaff how he was able to accomplish so much literary work, he replied laughingly: "Oh, that's easy. You must get up early and sit up late, and keep awake all day."

—The pennant for last spring's New York state intercollegiate field day has at last been officially awarded to Syracuse. The reason for the delay was that there was some dispute as to the eligibility of certain contestants. The field day this spring will be held in Syracuse, May 30.

—Teaching the children temperance should be an important department of school work. There are encouraging signs of the excellent work done for the good cause in the instruction in regard to the effect of alcohol on the human system, which is in practice in all state schools, and all states and territories except six.—Pittsburgh Catholic.

—The late Mr. S. M. Hamilton, of Baltimore, Md., bequeathed \$30,000 to the trustees of the Seventh Baptist church, of that city, the interest of which is to be used in city mission work, under the direction of that church. The Seventh church has, in addition, some \$10,000 at interest, which will enable it to do a fine work in city evangelization.

—The city of Charleston, S. C., has six public schools, four for whites and two for negroes. The white schools are as large and commodious as those for the colored pupils. The population of the city is five-twelfths white and seven-twelfths colored. Owing to the fact that so many colored pupils have to be turned away, two large private schools have just been established where payment is required, one having 250 and the other 400 pupils.

—Dr. F. E. Clark, president of the United Society of Christian Endeavor, is receiving a fund for the erection of a Christian Endeavor Technical school in Japan. It is to be in connection with the earthquake orphanage of Yokohama, in which two hundred of the children orphaned by the terrible earthquake are being sheltered. The work of feeding, clothing and educating the children is conducted on faith, like the Bristol orphanage, which George Muller founded.

—In Madrid recently Don Andres Gomes, a dean of the church, was flogged with all the ceremonial exactions of the ancient form. After expressing repentance for having been a freemason he was taken in solemn procession, led by priests and friars, to the official residence of the bishop, where his upper garments were taken off. As he knelt the bishop whipped him with cords over the bare shoulders, while the priests chanted "Miserere Mei."

—Hitherto the English and American Bible societies have enjoyed the privilege of circulating magazines and tracts and of maintaining traveling agents in Russia. But recently the various establishments at Kief and other large cities in the dominions of the czar have been closed by the police, the doors locked and sealed, and the employees ejected. Moreover, steps are now being taken to put a stop to the facilities which the societies have hitherto enjoyed in the exercise of their labors and in the extension of the sphere of their operations.

Thinking of Something Else.
Judge Peterby is very absent-minded. An interesting family event, which had been expected for some time, had occurred. The judge was at his desk studying some abstruse problem when the door opened, and servant announced that it was a boy.

"What is his name, and what does he want? Is he a messenger boy?" asked the judge absent-mindedly.—Alex. Sweet, in Texas Siftings.

With an Irish Cousin.
Husband—I'm afraid Kathrina is in the habit of telling untruths.
Wife—What makes you think so?
Husband—Didn't she tell you that the policeman who comes here is her cousin?
Wife—Yes.
Husband—Well, Kathrina is German.
—Judge.

Remote.
Papa—What are George's prospects.
Mabel—His uncle thinks he is proposing to a rich widow.—Puck.

An Insinuation.—Beggar.—"Gimme a dime, please." Gent—"Here's a nickel; that's the best I can do." Beggar—"Well, seein' it's you, I'll take half off for cash."—Detroit Free Press.

—Albert is from the Saxon, meaning All Bright; thirty-two kings and princes have borne this name.